GODS GOODNESS, VINDICATED

For the help of such (especially in Melancholy) as are Tempted to deny it, and think him Cruel, because of the Present and Future Misery of Mankind; With respect to the Doctrine of Reprobation and Damnation.

By Richard Baxter.

Published and Prefaced by a Friend at whose desire it was Written, and to whom it was Committed.

1 Joh. 4. 16. *GOD is LOVE, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in Him.*

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The Publisher to the Reader

HOW much the Glory of God and the Salvation of man is concerned in the right understanding of his Goodness in all his wayes and counsels towards them, is evidently seen by all those have any true notions of the Divine excellency and mans felicity. Gods Goodness

is his most solemnly proclaimed Name and Glory. It is his Goodness duly known that leads sinners to repentance, and unites their hearts to fear his name, and excites and forever terminates that love which is our holiness and happiness to eternity. It is also too well known how much this amiable divine Goodness is denyed or doubted of. What cavils are raised against it by men of corrupt minds! What secret prejudice lyes against it and how deeply rooted in our depraved nature! Yea with how fearful suggestions and apprehensions are some godly Christians (especially those that lye in the darkness of Melancholy)

some-

sometimes perplexed about it. And even such as are grounded and setled in it, are liable to be assaulted, and may sometimes stagger and stumble at it. And indeed though the kindness of God towards men hath appeared in the World as visible as the Sun in the Firmament; yet mans darkned understanding and his connate sensuality and selfishness taking occasion from the more mysterious parts of Providence, and those especially that most contradict the wisdom and interest of the flesh, hath caused disputes and raised doubts against the truth of that which is in it self as clear and sure as that there is a God or a World, or

anything existent. Whereupon this Author was earnestly desired by a friend to collect some principles in a narrow compass, that might silence Cavillers, succour the Tempted, and confirm the sound mind. And for these ends they are with his permission by his friend made publike. Hos. 14. 9. Who is wise? and he shall understand these things; prudent? and he shall know them. For the wayes of the Lord are right and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein.

April. 27.
1671.

Gods

God's Goodness Vindicated,

For the help of such, (especially in Melancholy) as are tempted to deny it, and think him cruel, because of the present and future misery of mankind with respect to the Doctrine of Reprobation and Damnation.

TO help all such persons out of the snare of this dangerous and troublesome temptation, as are described

in the propounded caſe, we muſt have reſpect. I. To the ſpecial caſe of the Melancholy, who are more lyable than others to ſuch diſturbances. II. To the common cauſe of their trouble and perplexity, as it conſiſteth in ſuch opinions as you deſcribe.

I. With the Melancholy, the greateſt difficulty lyeth, in making them capable to receive plain truths. For it will work, not as it is, but as it is received. And Melancholy doth breed and feed ſuch kind of thoughts, as naturally as a dead Carkaſs feedeth Vermine: Of forty or fifty Melancholy

perſons

persons that I have to deal with, there is scarce four that are not hurried with suggestions to Blasphemous thoughts, against God or the Sacred Scriptures; and scarce two that are not under dismal apprehensions that they are miserable, undone creatures, (except only some that are all carryed to conceits of Prophecies, Revelations, and some rare exalting communications of light unto themselves.) This unhappy disease of Melancholy is first seated in the Organs of Imagination and Passion both; that is, in the spirits, and thereby in the very Imagining faculty

it self : Though the *Natural parts* being without pain or sickness, they will not believe that it is a disease at all. It inclineth them usually to solitariness, to Musing and to dismal thoughts, that they are *undone*, *graceless*, *hopeless*, &c. which because they *passionately* seem to *feel*, no words, which *silence* them, will *satisfie* them ; or if you seem a little to satisfie them to *day*, its all gone to *morrow* : For a Melancholy man is like the eye that looketh on all things through a coloured glass, or in an ophthalmie, and seeth them according to the medium.

The Diſeaſe in ſome few beginneth with over-ſtretching thoughts and troubles about things ſpiritual; But in moſt that I have met with (ten to one) it beginneth with ſome worldly croſs, loſs or trouble, which grieveth them and caſteth them into troubleſome anxieties and cares; and then when by theſe the ſpirits are diſeaſed, it preſently turneth upon Conſcience; firſt *againſt themſelves* aggravating ſin and miſery, apprehending ogrimity from every thing which they ſee, hear, or think of, and next *againſt God and Scripture*; perplexed

ed in every thing that cometh before them, and quarrelling with all; and offended in all; And usually they are importuned, as if it were by something else within them, to say some blasphemous word against God, or do some mischief against themselves. No doubt through Satans special instigation, who can work on men according to the advantage of their bodily and sensitive distempers, and can do that on a Melancholy man (though a Godly man) which he cannot do on another; as he can also work on the Chollerick, Flegmatick, &c. according

to

to their temper.

1. The cure of this must be by these means; (1.) You must not suffer them to be much alone. (2.) You must divert them from all musing, and turn it to Discourse. (3.) You must keep from them displeasing things and persons, and help them to suitable pleasing company and converse. (4.) You must change their aire and company sometimes, that strange objects may change their imagination. (5.) Above all, if they have strength, you must not suffer them to be idle, to lie in bed longer than they sleep in the day; nor to sit musing, but must

get

get them upon the work of a lawful Calling, and drive them on so so much diligence, that body and mind may be closely employed. This will be more than all other ordinary means. (6.) In most, meet physick also will do very much, which must be ordered by an experienced Physician that is with them, or well knoweth them. (7.) Lastly, their false thoughts also must be confuted, and their minds have due satisfaction. And if you cannot have all, or most of these done, you can hardly expect a cure, unless time wear it off, which is doubtful.

II. The

II. The *falshood* and *vexation* of such mens thoughts, whether the *Melancholy* or others are brought to pass, 1. By a *false method of Reasoning*, 2. By *false opinions* which they have before received: (1.) It is a grosly deluding and subverting way of Reasoning, to begin at dark and doubtful consequents, thence to argue against certain, clear fundamental Principles: As if from some doubts about the position and motion of the Starrs, or of the nature of light heat and motion, men should argue that there is no *Sun*, or *Moon*, or *Starrs* at all: or that

that they have no *power* of *Light*, *Heat* or *Motion*; or as if from the many difficulties in Anatomy, about the circulation of the blood, the *oleum nervosum*, the *Lymphæ*, and its vessels, the passages and *succus* of the *pancreas* and *gall*, the transcolation through the intestines into the *venæ lacteæ*, the *chylie glandules*, and such like, one should arise to a conclusion that there is no *blood*, no *chyle*, no *veines*, no *glandules*, no *head* no *body*: or from the Controversie, whether the Heart be a meer Muscle without any proper *parenchyma*, one should grow to conclude that there is no

heart:

heart: so such persons from points beyond mans reach; about Gods decrees and intentions and the mysteries of providence, conclude or doubt against *Gods Goodness*; that is, whether indeed there be a God: I have spoken so fully to this case in my Reasons of the *Christ. Rel. p.* 95. and in that whole Chapter, that I would desire you to peruse it. I shall now only give you twenty Questions which the tempted person may challenge all the subtilty and malice of Hell to answer; for it is easie to Justifie the Goodness of God.

Question. *Is it not certain that*

that there is a world, in which is abundance of Created Goodness? The Earth is but a point as to all the World: There is a Sun, and Moon, and multitudes of glorious Starrs, which are many of them manifold greater than the Earth. There are Angels, there are men, there are variety of Creatures in this low part of the Creation, which have all their excellency; All the men on Earth cannot by any contribution of their counsels, discern the ten thousandth part of the excellency of this little parcel of Gods works: And as to the *whole*, it is next to nothing which

we

we comprehend : Every Worme, every plant, excelleth the higheſt humane apprehenſion : Is there no *Phyſical Goodneſs* in all this unmeaſurable, this harmonious, this glorious frame ? Look about you, look upwards, and deny it if you can : And is there no *Moral goodneſs* in holy men and Angels ? And is there no felicity and *Glorious Goodneſs* in all the Heavens ? What mind can be ſo black, as to deny all Created Goodneſs ?

Queſt. 2. *Is not all the Goodneſs of the whole Creation communicated from God ?* Did it make it ſelf ? or who

who else made it? Are not all effects from their causes? And is he not the *first cause*? see what I have said to prove this fully in the aforesaid Treatise.

Quest. 3. *Hath God made a world that is better than himself?* Could he give more goodness than he had to give? Must not he needs be better than all his works?

Quest. 4. *Is he fit to be quarrelled with for want of Goodness, who hath infinitely more Goodness than the whole world besides?* More than Sun and Starrs, Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men, all set together in all their sin-

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gle and their united, harmonious worth? If he be better than all, is he not most beyond accusation or exception?

Quest. 5. *Must not God necessarily excell his works? must he needs make every worm a God? or must he make any God, or equal to himself?* Is not that a contradiction? And is there not necessarily an *Imperfection* in all that is *not God*? Nothing can be so *great*, so *wise*, so *good*, so *holy*, so *immutable*, so *self-sufficient*, so *blessed*, as God.

Quest. 6. Is not Gods Creation a *harmonious Universe*, of which *Individuals are but the parts*: Are not the

Parts

Parts for the *whole*, and
their *worth* to be *valued* for
the *whole*, or for the *common*
ends; muſt every pin in
Watch or every ſtitch in
your Garment or every part
of your houſe, or every
member of your Body and
every humour or excrement
in it, have that excellency
which may ſimply diguiſe it
ſelf in a compared or ſepa-
rated ſenſe? or rather muſt
it not have that excellency
with belongeth to it as a part
of the *whole*, for the *common*
end of all together? Is not
that beſt, that is beſt to the
order, beauty, and uſefulneſs
ſeſs of the univerſal frame?

Queſt. 7. *Is it neceſſary*
this

his end, or to prove Gods Goodness that all Individuals, or Species of Creatures must be of the highest rank or excellency? Is God wanting in *Goodness*, if every *Man* be not an *Angel*, or every *Angel* made unchangeable, or every *unlearned* man a *Doctor*, or every *Star* a *Sun*, or every *cloud* or *clod* a *Star*, or every *beast* a *man*, or every *Worm* an *Elephant*, or every *Weed* a *Rose*, or every *Member* a *Heart* or *Head*, or every excrement, *Blood and Spirits*: will you think that a man doth reason like a man who thus disputeth, [He that doth not do that which is best when he can do it, is not perfectly

fectly good, and therefo
is not God. But he th
maketh Toads and Serpen
and maketh the guts the p
sage of filthy excreme
when he could have ma
them equal with the hea
doth not do that which
best when he can do it
Therefore he is not perfe
ly good, Therefore he is n
God: Therefore there is
God: Therefore there
no Creator, Therefore th
World hath no cause, t
made it self and preserve
it self: Therefore I mad
my self, and must rule a
preserve my self.] Co
clude next. [Therefore
will never suffer, nor die,

an

and thus prove the wisdom of such reasoning, if you can.

Quest. 8. If God made man and all things, *Did he not make them for himself, for the pleasure of his own will? Must he not needs in reason be the end of all, who is the Beginning and cause of all?* And is not that *means* the *Best*, which is aptest to the *End*? And doth not the proper *Goodness* of a *means* consist in its *aptitude* to promote the *End*? And then is not that the *Goodness* of all *Creatures*, (partly to be what the Creatour efficiently maketh them, and partly) to fulfil

his will, and what Creatu
hath not *this Goodneſs*
to the abſolute will o
his Decrees which all ful
fill.

Queſt. 10. Are not now
both theſe concluſions of in
fallible *certainty*, and there
fore not at all contradi
ctory, 1. *That God is no*
Good, becauſe he is th
cauſe of all the Good i
the whole Creation, 2. And
yet that there are *Toads*
Serpents, *Darkneſs*, *Death*
ſickneſs, *pains*, *&c.* which
therefore are no whit in
conſiſtent with his Good
neſs? neither of them be
ing capable of a denyal, o
of a ſober doubt.

Queſt.

Quest. 10. Is not an *Angel*, and *Man*, *endued with Reason and Free-will*, and *left to choose or refuse his own Rectitude and Felicity* (or misery,) *capable of Knowing*, *Loving*, *Serving and Enjoying God*, *if he will*; and *instructed by a Perfect holy Law* (with Rewards and Punishments) *to choose a-right*, I say, *Is not such a Creature as noble and as meet for God to make as a stone* or a *toad or worm*, or *Serpent*? If God choose to *please* his own holy *will*, by making a world of such *Intellectual free agents*, whom he will (ordinarily) rule by the way of *Moral Laws and*

 Motives,

Motives, is this any disparagement to his Wisdom and Goodness? It is true, that such a *mutable free-will* is below a *confirmed immutable will*. But it is as true, that a *Toad* is below a *man*. And that Infinite wisdom thought not meet to make all his Creatures of *one mould* or *size*, not to make all faces alike, nor all the stones in the street alike, but in wonderful variety. It is not then unbeseeming God to make a world of *Rational free agents*; under such a moral Government by Laws.

Quest. 18. If all these *free agents* have abused their

their Liberty and undoing themselves, if he so far shew mercy to them all, as that they may be all happy if they will, and none of them shall perish but for wilfull and final refusing of the saving means and mercy which is offered to them; and if they will, they may live with God himself, and Christ and Angels in endless Glory; and none shall lose this free-given felicity but for final refusal and contempt, preferring certain vanity and dung before it. And if officers be commissioned and means provided, to acquaint all, in several measures with the

reasons why they should choose Heaven and Holiness before the dirty pleasures of sin, and to importune them daily to such a choice; And if a life of mercies be granted to allure them, and afflictions to drive them, and examples to invite them to choose aright: I say *after all this, have any of these persons cause to complain, that God dealeth not mercifully with them?* Shall they, that will *not accept* of life and mercy *offered* them, accuse him as cruel that *importuneth them to accept it?*

Quest. 12. *Is the Goodness of a King to be judged of*

by

by the Interest of Murderers in the Goal? When he restrained them by Laws, when he warned them by legal penalties, when he encourageth and protecteth all the Good, When the lives of the Innocent need this severity against the wicked; when the Common Wealth would take him to be bad, that would not restrain Thieves and Murderers by penalties: Yea though this King could if he would, have set a constant guard on these men to have kept these men from Murdering, but he thinketh meet only to Govern them by Laws: Will

you rather argue, (That the Goal is a place of misery, Therefore the King is cruel) Then (The rest of the Kingdom flourish in prosperity and peace: Therefore the King is wise and graticus.) And is not this little dirty spot of Earth, the next door to Hell, a place defiled by wilful sin, and unfit to be the Index of Gods benignity, from whence we should take an Estimate of it?

Quest. 13. *Do not all men in the World confess Gods Goodness first or last?* Do not all *true believers* (that are themselves) acknowledge, that he is *Infinitely Good,*

Good, and *Good to them*; and that his *mercy is over all his works*, and *endureth for ever*? And do not the Consciences of the *Damned* grind and tear them for the contempt of *Goodness*, and setting against *mercy*, even *mercy to themselves*? This is the fewel that feedeth Hell not by way of *delusion*, but *experimental conviction*. If the man that doubteth of Gods Goodness and mercy to him, do *despair*, or *fear damnation*, he foolishly contradicteth himself. For Hell and Damnation is a state of misery and torment, in the *loss*, and in the *Conscience* and *sense* of *reprobate*

and *abused mercy*. If therefore God be *not merciful* to you, then you need not fear being damned, for sinning against and *refusing mercy*: For that which *is not*, cannot be *sinned against*, or *abused*: If God be *merciful*, you may be saved if you will accept this mercy: If he *be not*, you cannot in Justice be damned for rejecting that mercy which was none. And if God be not merciful and Just, he is not God. And if there be no God, there is none to damn you. But all confess in Heaven and in Hell, some with Joy, and some with self-tormenting anguish that

God

God was unconceiveably Good and merciful.

Queſt. 14. *What if it were but one or two in a whole Kingdom that were damned, and that only for obſtinate unperſwadable final refuſal of grace and ſalvation, and all the reſt of the World ſhould be ſaved*; tell me, would you then ſtill ſuſpect God of cruelty, or deny his Goodneſs? If not, I further ask you;

Queſt. 15. *Have you ſo good acquaintance with the extent of the univerſe, the ſuperiour World, the number of Angels and bleſſed ſpirits, as that you are ſure that it is proportionably more in the whole*

whole universe, that are miserable? Though some pievish men have wrangled at what I have said of this in my forecited Books, I am so far from flattering their self conceited Wisdom that I will say it over again, That it is agreed on by Philosophers that the *Earth* as to the *universe*, is no bigger than a *point* or *inch* is to the *whole earth*; we see over our heads, a wonderful Sun, a multitude of fixed and unfixed *Stars*, of wonderful magnitude, divers of them many times bigger than all the earth; besides the vast Ethereal interspaces; we see in a Tube

or Telescope a marvellous Likeness of the Moon to this Earth, with Shades, inequalities, &c. Multitudes of Starrs in the *Galaxie* and elsewhere, are discernable in the Telescope, which without it no eye can see; Little know we how far the World extendeth it self, beyond all these Starrs and Sun which we can see: or whether there be Millions of the like beyond our sight: The Scripture telleth us of innumerable Angels, Holy and Glorious spirits that attend Christ in the service of this lower World. No Scripture telleth us whether all the Glorious

or

or blessed Spirits be thus imployed as *Angels* for Mankind, or whether ten Thousand Thousand fold more be otherwise employed. No Scripture or Reason telleth us whether Sun or Moon, Starrs and intermediate *Æther*, be inhabited or not? It is temerity to affirm that *they are*. And it is as great temerity to say that *they are not*: It is lawful to doubt: And it is lawful to conjecture that it is *most probable they are*, Considering, 1. That Use is the excellency of the Creation, and the deadest parts are the baseſt, 2. That the Earth, and Water,

and

and Aire are full of Men, Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Worms, Flies, &c. 3. That it is incredible to him that looketh upward, that Sun, Moon, Starrs and Æther, are baser Regions than this dirty Earth; and consequently that they are baser as to their use and inhabitants: These thoughts of an uncertain thing, are lawful, to him that will go no further than he hath evidence, and not make an uncertain thing seem certain; And certain it is, that spirits are innumerable. And though some of these are fallen to be Devils, God hath not told us how many: Nor can

we

we know that it is one to a million of happier Creatures. And can that man then, who is offended with God, not for damning a very *few*, but for the *proportion* of the damned in comparison of others, tell what he saith: can he say, if God had cast off *all the Earth*; that it had been more than one of a million of millions as to the whole Creation. Its true I cannot tell the number: But it is as true that when our foundation is sure; that God is infinitely wise and Good, it is madness to accuse him as unwise, or evil, or cruel, for that which we must

must confeſs we do not know; and to talk againſt him in the dark. Stay till you ſee who dwelleth in all the ſuperiour Regions and then take your ſelves for fitter diſcerners of your makers wayes.

Queſt. 16. Are you well acquainted with the *nature and degrees* of the *future miſeries* which tempt you to think that *God is cruel*? They are not all of *one degree*; What if much of them be *ſtill voluntary* to the miſerable ſouls? The Devils who are *now* tormented in *Hell*, are yet inhabitants of the *air*, and exerciſed in voluntary acts

of

of Malice. I take it to be
no small degree of Hell
which the ungodly *choose*
and *love* and *possess* among
us here on Earth, and
will not be diſſwaded
from; They are without
all holy Communion with
God, and they would be
ſo, They are out of Hea-
ven and they would be ſo;
They are debaſed and con-
fined to ſenſual pleaſures
and wordly vanities and
they will be ſo; They
are the drudges of the De-
vil and the ſervants of the
fleſh, and the ſlaves of men
and they would be ſo;
They are defiled with ſin
and impriſoned in their
own

own Concupiscence and they would be so: They are corrupted and tantalized, and vexed, and tossed up and down by their irregular desires; In a word, they have the plague of sin and have neither holiness nor true happiness, and so they will have it to be and will not be cured; Now these tempted persons can see a misery in *pain*; but can see no such evil in *sin*, for which such *pain* should be inflicted: when as *sin* it self and that which they are willing of, is so great a part of their misery, as that in this life, the rest is as nothing to it. And though,

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will be *involuntary* here
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proportion will be betwe
the voluntary and Involu
tary part.

And what makes th
men that they do not pit
a Drunkard, a Fornicator,
Worldling, a sensual Lo
or Gentleman that hath
better than the shad
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ther the Tempted, nor th
themselves would call G
cruel if he would let th
so live in health for ever
even a healthful Begg
would call God Merciful
he might never die, n
be more miserable. Bu

Princes

Princes or Lords would call him cruel if he should put them into the Beggars or Labourers ease: You accuse not God as Cruel for making Toads and Serpents, Worms and Vermine, because they are not troubled with their own condition; But if you could imagine them to have the knowledge how much happier Man is, the case would alter: Or if God should change men into Toads and Serpents, you would call him unmerciful; when yet he is no more bound antecedently to man than unto them: Thus because these tempted

persons

persons have as *Adam*, wh
his eyes were opened,
disquieting knowledge,
know Good and Evil
nally; their own apprehe
sions (as *Adams* of his N
kedness) maketh that see
cruelty, which seemed
fruit of *Goodness*
fore.

The summ is, when y
come into another wor
and see what *manner*
punishment it is that G
exerciseth on the damn
(as well as on *how many*
you will then be perfect
satisfied, that there is
thing but that *amiable*
stice, which is the fruit
Holiness, Goodness

Wis

Wiſdom in it all; and you ſhall ſee nothing in the puniſhment of the miſerable which you ſhall either *blame* or *wiſh were otherwiſe*, if you come to Heaven.

To which let me adde, when you come to ſee the *Heavenly Glory* and how the God of infinite Goodneſs hath advanced ſuch innumerable Hoſts (if not Worlds) of Men and Angels into ſuch wonderful felicity, and compare this with the ſufferings of the Devils and of his damned followers, inſtead then of quarrelling with the Goodneſs of God, you will be wrapt up in the admirations and

and Praiſes of it with ſ
delights, to all Eternity.

Queſt. 17. And tell m
Is he fit to entertain ſuſpic
ons and quarrels with G
who knoweth God to be G
and knoweth himſelf to
but a man; I ſpeak n
only in reſpect of our
ſeriority, as the Potſhe
ſhould not quarrel wi
the Potter: But in reſp
of our *great and cert*
Ignorance: Are we n
puzzled about the poor
Worm and pile of Gr
(whoſe manifold myſteri
no Mortal man can yet D
cover) Are we not gro
ignorant about every thi
(even viſible and palpable
whic

which we see, and touch and have to do with: Do we not know that we know but little, even of our selves, or of any thing about us in the world? And shall the darkened soul, while it must operate in such a puddle of brains and humours, be so madly proud, as to presume of a knowledge, which findeth out errours and badness in God, who is infinitely wise and good? Nothing is more sure than that *God is most wise and good*; and nothing should be easilier known to us, than that *we are very blind and bad*: And if such wretches then cannot re-

concile their thoughts abou
Gods works, ſhould the
not rather ſuſpect *them-*
ſelves than *him*? *ſuſpect*, d
I ſay? ſhould they not ta
it as the ſureſt verity, th
it is, *God*, that is not onl
Juſtifiable, but *infinitely Am-*
able and Laudable, and th
it is worſe than bruitiſ
neſs, for ſuch Moles to
his accuſers?

Queſt. 18. Yea is thi
accuſing God, a fit employ
ment for *that perſon*, w
liveth in a Land of mercies;
who hath been bred up in mer-
cy, preſerved by mercy, &
differenced by ſaving mercy
from the ungodly; who ha
been called from blindneſs
carnality

carnality and prophaneneſs, and entertained many a time in holy Worſhip with God; who hath been waſhed in Chriſts blood and Juſtified from ſo many and grievous ſins, and made of an enemy an adopted Child, and of an heir of Hell, an heir of Heaven, and all this by the tender mercies of a provoked God, a gratious Redeemer, and a holy Sanctifier? Shall *this perſon?* I ſay, *this*, be one that inſtead of praiſing God with the raptures of continual Joy, ſhall turn his accuſer? O let the guilty that readeth this, ſtop here, and fall down on his knees to God,

and melt into tears in the ſenſe of ſuch unkindneſs.

Queſt. *But can a Child of God be poſſibly guilty of ſo great a ſin as this?*

Anſw. I ſpeak not now of the malignant Atheiſt: But of the Melancholy tempted perſon: Alas, it is the *Melancholy diſeaſe*, and the *Devil*, more than he: God pittyeth his Childrens frowardneſs, eſpecially when neceſſitated naturally by Diſeaſes: and he that pardoned pievish *Jonas*, that ſaid, *I do well to be angry to the death*; and complaining *Job*; and excuſed his ſleepy Diſciples with [*The ſpirit*

is

is willing but the flesh is weak,] will not condemn an upright soul, for the effect of a feaverish deliration, or a Melancholy that overcomes his natural power of resistance.

Quest. 19. *Would you thus argue or quarrel against Gods Greatness and Wisdom, as you do against his* Goodness? You suspect him to be *unmerciful*, because he cureth not mens *sins*, and preventeth not their *damnation*. And have you not the like occasion to argue against his other perfections? Do you think he reasoneth soberly that saith, [*He that maketh Asses when he might*

have made them mew, or maketh Ideots, or maketh stones that know nothing; He that is the Governour of such a foolish, distracted, confused world as mankind is, is foolish himself or unskilful in Government or wanteth wisdome: But God doth thus] Is he not worse than a fool that will accuse his God of folly? Doth not the admirable harmony of all the world, and his wonderful work in every Creature, prove his incomprehensible *Wisdom?* And what would you say to him that should thus reason [*He that maketh impotent wormes, that suffereth the Good to die, that suffereth*

ſtreth the Tyrants of the Earth to perſecute his Church and cauſe, is Impotent, and not Almighty: But ſo doth God] Would you not ſay, [*I have the wonderful frame of Heaven, and Earth, the Sun and Starrs, the Sea and Land to prove to me that he is Almighty. This therefore is a proved foundation truth, to which all doubts muſt be reduced:*] And if you dare not be ſo impudent as to deny his *Omniſcience* or *Omnipotence*, when you think there is *errour* or *impotency* in his works: Why will you any more deny his *Goodneſs*, when you dream that there is *badneſs* in his works?

Do you not know that *Power, Wisdom and Goodness* are *Gods Three essential Principles of Operation, Virtues, or Properties?* And that they are none of them greater or less than other? And that his *Goodness* (though not as to be *measured by humane Interest*) is equal to his *Wisdom* and his *greatness?* And do you not know that to deny *any one* of the three, yea to deny *the perfection of any one* of them, is to deny that there *is any God?* And is he sober that will argue [*There are Frogs and Toads there are Worms and Asses there are fools and miserable*

sinners,

sinners, Therefore there is no God.] When as there could neither be any of *these*, nor *any world* or *being*, if there were no God?

Quest. 20. Lastly, now Consider, whether evidently, the root of all this sin be not (besides Melancholy and Satan) the power of *selfishness* and *sensual* or *fleshly Interest*. Alas, poor men, that were made for their God, to rejoyce wholly in Pleasing him and to shew forth the lustre of his Glory, are fallen unto Themselves and Flesh; and now they that should wholly devote and refer themselves

to God, do ſtrive to make God a ſervant to themſelves, and meaſure his Goodneſs by the Standard of their fleſhly ſence and Intereſt; And God ſhall be with them no longer Good, that is no longer God, than he will give them their wills, and ſerve their fleſh, and keep them from croſſes, and loſſes, and pains, and govern the World according to their fancies; And when they are committing this odious ſelf-exalting Idolatry, and abaſing God, even then will they Judge themſelves both Wiſer, and more merciful than he: Yea, when a Melancholy

man

man *despaireth* in the sense of his *own sin* and *badness*, at that very time he thinketh *himself more Merciful than the God* of Infinite Goodness, and accuseth *his God* for being *crueller than he himself*. O man into what distraction and confusion art thou fain, when thou departest from thy God and makest into that blind and wretched self?

And tell me, what is but the *mirth* of all the *poor*, the *pained*, the *dying*, &c. were but reconciled to their *suffering state*? would that which *pleaseth* the *will* be matter of any complaint? You may see then that it is not

not Gods providence, &c. but the *wills* and *waies* of ſinners that are the diſeaſed cauſes of all their wranglings. And if *our wills* were cured and reduced to *Gods will*, we ſhould find no fault with him; If I can but be truly *willing* of impriſonment, poverty, or death, how can I feel any thing in it to complain of? When even ſinners (as aforeſaid.) do obſtinately here take their miſery for their happineſs, and are contented with it ſo farr as it is *voluntary*.

By that time theſe twenty Queſtions are Anſwered, the accuſations of God

as wanting Goodneſs, will all turn to the accuſers ſhame.

II. I am next briefly to detect the falſe opinions, which do ordinarily cauſe theſe perſons errours.

1. It is falſe doctrine to affirm that *God condemneth the greater part of his Intellectual Creatures* (as I have ſhewed) though he condemn never ſo many of this ungodly world.

2. *It is not true that God decreeth to condemn any man but for ſin* (for ſin, I ſay, as the cauſe of his damnation.)

3. God decreeth to condemn none at age (which

I add but to exclude foolish cavils) *for* Adam's *sin only*; nor for *any other sin only* that is not conjoyned with an obstinate final impenitencie, and rejecting offered mercy, and neglecting means appointed for their salvation.

4. *Gods Decrees do cause no mans sin*, (nor his damnation any further than as supposing sin:) for Dr. *Twisse* himself still professeth, 1. That Reprobation is an Immanent act, and *nihil ponit in objecto*, putteth nothing at all into the person. 2. And that Reprobation inferreth no necessity of sin or misery, but

that

that which is called *necessitas consequentiæ*, and not any *necessitas consequentiæ*; and *Arminius* and all confess that Gods bare foreknowledge causeth or inferreth a *necessity consequentiæ*; which truly is but a *Logical necessity in order of argumentation*, when one thing is *proved* by another; and not by *Physical necessity* in order *of causation*, as one thing is *caused* by another.

And whereas they say [*Then man might have frustrated Gods decree.*] I ask them, whether man can frustrate *Gods fore-knowledge*; suppose God to *foreknow* sin without decreeing it

it (of which more anon) is not this a good argument (*All that God foreknoweth will certainly come to pass. But God foreknoweth*, e. g. Judas sin, *Therefore it will certainly come to pass*) And what of all this? It doth not come to pass because God foreknoweth it, no more than the Sun will rise to morrow, because you foreknow it.

And if you say, *That no power can frustrate Gods foreknowledge*, I answer, They are delusory words of one that knoweth not what he saith: For it is one thing to *have power to make God Ignorant*, and another thing to

to have *power to do otherwise than that which he foreknoweth you will do.* No man hath *power to make God ignorant*: But all sinners may have power to *do otherwise than that which God foreknoweth we will do.* For God doth not foreknow that *e. g. Gehezi*, shall *not have Power to forbear* a lye: but only that *he will not forbear it*: Yea more, Gods *foreknowledge* doth prove that *sinners have power to do otherwise*; For that which God foreknoweth will be. But God foreknoweth that men *will abuse their power to sin*, or will sin when *they had Power to do otherwise*, Therefore

fore it will be ſo in the Event.

Now if you will *call their power to do otherwiſe, a power to fruſtrate Gods foreknowledge*, you will but ſpeak fooliſhly: For the *Power it ſelf is* foreknown: And the object of knowledge *in eſſe cognito*, is not after the act of knowledge: And if the perſon will not actually ſin, God could not foreknow that he will ſin: So that foreknowledge is here (when it is not cauſal) but a medium in a Syllogiſme, and inferreth only the neceſſity of the conſequence in arguing and doth not cauſe the thing fore-

foreknown.

Now when Dr. *Twiſſe* ſaith that all the Schoolmen agree that no *neceſſity Conſequentiæ* or of *Cauſation*, but only *Conſequentiæ*, doth follow the decree of Reprobation, ſee how far he and *Arminius* are in this agreed, (Though I know ſome give another ſence of *neceſſitas conſequentiæ*:) But I come cloſer to the matter yet.

4. *God Decreeth no mans ſin*: Neither *Adams* nor any others. He may decree the *effect* which ſinners accompliſh (as the death of Chriſt) And he may *overrule* men in their ſin, and bring

bring good out of it, &c. But sin is not a thing that he can *will* or *cause*, and so not *Decree*, which signifieth a *volition*.

5. *God cannot be proved to Decree, or Will the Permission of mans sin*: For to *Permit* is *nothing*. It is but, *not to hinder*; which is *no act*: And to *Decree* and *Will* is a *Positive Act*: And if you fain God to have a *Positive Volition* or *Nolition*, of *every nothing*, or *Negative*; then he must have *positive decrees* of every *meer possible Atome*, *Sand*, *Worm*, *Name*, *Word*, *Thought of Man*, &c. That such and such a *nothing* shall never be:

be: whereas there needeth no more to keep any thing from being (in this case) than Gods *not Causing it, not Willing it, not Decreeing it.* The Creatures Active Nature, Disposition, Objects, and Circumstances, are here presupposed: And the *Impedition* necessary, is by *Act*, (or substraction of these aforesaid.) And Gods *nongere* needs no positive decree; I must tell the Learned Reader that this room will not serve to Answer his foreseen objections: but I hope I have done it sufficiently elsewhere.

6. God

6. *God hath not only Decreed to give, but actually given a great deal of mercy to them that perish, which had a natural tendency to their Salvation.* Christ hath so far dyed for all, as that none shall perish for want of a sufficiency in the satisfaction made; He hath purchased and given for all, a grant or gift of himself, with Pardon, Justification, Adoption and right to glory, on condition of acceptance (where the Gospel cometh.) In a word, so that none of them shall perish, that do not finally refuse the Grace and Salvation offered

fered them.

7. *Men are not Impenitent and Unbelievers for want of that called natural faculty*, or Power to choose and refuse aright; but for want of a *right disposition* of their own wills: And by such a *moral Impotency* which is indeed their viciousness, and the wickedness of their wills, and doth not excuse but aggravate the sin. (See Mr. *Truman* of Natural and Moral Impotency.)

8. To *rectifie mens wicked wills and dispositions, God giveth them a World of means*; The whole Creation, and Documents of providence;

providence; all the precepts, promises, threats, of Scripture; Preaching, Example, Mercies, Judgements, Patience, and inward motions of the Spirit: All which might do much to mens Conversion and Salvation, if they would but do what they could on their own part.

9. *Adam* could have stood when he fell, without any more Grace than that which he abused and neglected. Gods grace which was not effectual to him, was as much as was necessary to his standing, if he would have done his best.

And

And it was left to his *free-will*, to have made that help effectual by improvement: He fell; not because he *could not stand*, but because he would not.

10. *For ought any can prove, multitudes that believe not, now, but perish, may have rejected a help as sufficient to their believing, as* Adams *was to his standing.*

11. All men have power to do more good, and avoid more Evil than they do; And he that will not do what he can do, Justly suffereth.

12. *Heathens and Infidels are not left unredeemed under the remedilesse Curse, and Covenant of Innocency which we broke in* Adam; but are all brought by the Redemption wrought by Christ, under a Law or termes of Grace. 1. God made a Covenant of Grace with all mankind in *Adam*, *Gen.* 3. 15. who was by Tradition to acquaint his posterity with it, as he did to *Cain* and *Abel* the Ordinances of Oblation and Sacrifice. 2. This Covenant was renewed with all mankind in *Noah*. 3. This Covenant is not repealed, otherwise than by a perfecter

fecter Edition to them that have the plenary Gospel. 4. The full Gospel Covenant is made *for all*, as to the *Tenor* of it, and the *command* of *Preaching* and *offering* it to all. 5. They that have not this Edition may yet be under the first Edition. 6. The Jewes under the first Edition were saved without believing in *this determinate person of Jesus*, or that he *should die for sin*, and *rise again*, and send *down the spirit*: For the *Apostles* believed it not before hand, *Luk.* 18. 34. *Joh.* 12. 16. *Luke* 9. 45. *Mark* 9. 34. *Luk.* 24. 21, 25, 26. *Act.* 1. 6,

7, 8. yet were they then in a ſtate of ſaving grace as appeareth by *Joh.* 14. & 15. & 16. & 17. throughout. 7. The reſt of the world that had not the ſame ſupernatural Revelation were not then bound to believe ſo much as the Jewes were, about the Meſſiah. 8. God himſelf told them all, that they were not under the *unremedyed curſe of the Covenant of Innocency*, by giving them a life full of thoſe mercies which they had forfeited, which all did tend to *lead them to repentance, and to ſeek after God*, Rom. 2. 4 Act. 17. 27. and *find him*

out,

yea he left not himself without witness, for that which may be known of him, and his invisible things are manifested and clearly seen in his works, so that the wicked are *without excuse*, Rom. 1. 19. 20. Act. 14. 17. So that all Heathens are bound *to believe that God is, and that he is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6. and are all under the duty of *using certain means in order to their own recovery and salvation*, and to believe that they are not commanded to do *this in vain*: So that Gods own Providence by a course of such *mercies*,

which cannot ſtand with the execution of the unremedyed violated Law of Innocency, together with his obliging all men to *Repentance*, and to the uſe of a certain courſe of *means*, in order to their ſalvation, is a *promulgation of a Law of Grace*, according to the *firſt Edition*, and diſtinguiſheth man from unredeemed Devils.

And they that ſay that all the Infidel World have all this *Mercy*, *Duty*, *Means*, *and hope*, without any Redemption or Satisfaction of Chriſt as the procureing cauſe, are in the way to ſay next, that the

churches Mercies too, might have been given without Christ. 9. Of a truth God is no respecter of persons, but in every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness is accepted with him; Act. 10. 34, 35. For God will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour and incorruptibility, eternal life; Rom. 2. 6, 7. Glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek; v. 10. For there is no respect of persons with God. v. 11. For when

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the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things comained in the Law, these having not the Law are a Law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another, v. 14, 15. And they shall be Judged according to that Law which they were under, (Natural or Mosaical,) even *by Jesus Christ*, v. 12. 16. (And it is the work of the Spirit promised, to believers, to *write the Law of God in their hearts.*)

10. Though

10. Though a ſpecial promiſe was made to *Abraham*, as an *Eminent believer*, and the Jewiſh Nation were the *peculiar people of God*, advanced to greater priviledges than any others in the World; yet were they not the *whole Kingdom of God* the *Redeemer*, nor the *only people* that were in a *Covenant of Grace*, or in a ſtate of Salvation: For *Sem* was alive after *Abrahams* death, who was not like to be leſs than a King, and to have a Kingdom or people Governed according to his Fidelity. And *Melchizedeck* was a King of Righ-

teouſneſs and *Peace* (not like to be *Sem* by the Scituation of his Countrey.) And a Righteous King would govern in Righteouſneſs : *Job* and his friends are evidences of the ſame truth. And we have no proof or probability that all *Abrahams* ſeed by *Iſhmael* and *Eſau*, and *Keturah*, were Apoſtates (for they continued Circumciſion.) And what all the reſt of the World was, we know not ſave that in general moſt grew Idolatrous, and the *Canaanites* in ſpecial. But that they all apoſtatized from the Covenant of Grace made with

with *Adam* and *Noah* there is no proof: We have not the History of any of their Countreys fully, so as to determine of such cases. In *Nineve* God ruled by that Law of Grace, which called them to *repent*, and spared them upon their *Belief* and *Repentance*; *Because he was a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth of the Evil*, Jonah. 4. 2.

And that God dealeth not with mankind now as the meer Judge of the violated Law of Innocency, he declareth not only by the full testimony of the

Providence

Providence or *Mercies* given to the ſinful World, but alſo by the very *name* which he proclaimeth unto *Moſes* (which ſignifieth his *nature*, and his *mind* towards others, and not what he is to the Jewes alone,] Exod. 34. 6, 7. [*The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for Thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin,*] (All which is inconſiſtent with the Relation of God as a Judge of a people only under the Curſe of an unremedied violated Law, and unredeemed, though he

he add, [*and that will by no means clear the guilty, &c.*] that is, will neither Judge them innocent that are guilty of the Crime, nor Judge them to Life, that are guilty of Death, according to the tenour of the Law which they are under; [*Purificando non purificabit*] as the literal version; that is, will not Judge unjustly by acquitting him that is to be condemned, or, as the *Chaldee* Paraphrase hath it, [*not Justifying those that are not converted.*]

It is enough for us therefore to know that the visible Church hath manifold

fold priviledges above all others, *Rom.* 3. 1, 2, 3. &c. And that salvation is more easie, sure and plenteous where the Gospel cometh than with any others, and that we have therefore great Cause to rejoice with thankfulness for our lot, and that the poor World lyeth in wickedness and must be pitty'd, pray'd for, and helped to our power, and that *God is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe*, and that *he is good to all and his mercies are over all his works*, and that he will never damn one soul, that *loveth him as God.* But what

what is in the Hearts of all men in the World, and consequently how they shall be used at last, he only that searcheth the heart can tell, and it is neither our *duty* nor our *interest* nor *possible* to us, to know it of all particulars; much less to conclude that none among them have such *Love*, who believe him to be *infinitely good*, and to be to *them a merciful pardoning God*! And we know withall, that all they that know not Jesus Christ as this determinate person that was Born of the Virgin *Mary*, Suffered under *Pontius Pilate*,

was

was Crucified, Dead, Buried, Rose again, &c. do yet receive all the foresaid mercies *by him*, and not by any other Name or Mediation, nor yet *without* his purchasing Mediation.

13. And if besides all the mercy that God sheweth to others, he do *antecedently* and *positively Elect certain persons*, by an *absolute Decree*, to *overcome* all their resistances of his spirit, and to draw them to Christ, and by Christ to himself, by such a power and way as shall infallibly convert and save them, and not leave the success of his Mercy; and

his

his Sons preparations to the bare uncertainty of the mutable Will of depraved man, What is there in this that is injurious to any others? or that representeth God unmerciful to any, but such whose eye is evil, because he is good, and as a free Benefactour may give more mercy to some than others of equal Demerits? If they that hold *no Grace but what is universal*, and left, as to the success, to the *will of man*, as the *determining cause*, do think that this is well consistent with the mercifulness of God; surely they that

hold

hold as much *universal Grace* as the former; and that indeed *all have so much* as *bringeth and leaveth the success to mans will*, and deny to no man anything which the other give, do make God *no less* merciful than they, but *more*, if they moreover assert a *special Decree and Grace* of God, *by which with a chosen number* shall *antecedently Infallibly secure his Ends* in their repentance, faith, perseverance and salvation? Is this any detraction from, or diminution of, his *universal Grace*? or rather a *higher Demonstration*

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tion of his Godness? As it is no wrong to man that God maketh Angels, more holy immutable and happy.

14. And what if men cannot there tell how to resolve the question, *Whether any, or how many are ever converted and saved, by that meer Grace which we call sufficient, or rather Necessary, and common to those that are not converted; and whether mans will ever make a saving determining improvement of it?* must plain truth be denyed, because difficulties cannot easily be solved? And yet in due place I

doubt

doubt not but I have shewed, that this question it self is formed upon false suppositions, and is capable of a satisfactory solution.

15. I conclude in general, that nothing is more sure than that *God is most Powerful, Wise and Good*, and that *All his works*, to those that truly know them, *do manifest all these in conjunction, and perfect Harmony*, and that as to his *Decrees* and *Providences*, he is the *Cause of all Good*, and of *no sin in act or habit*, and that *our sin and destruction is of our selves*, and *of him is our Holiness*

Holineſs and Salvation: And that he *attaineth all his ends as certainly as if mans will had no liberty*, but were acted by *Phyſical neceſſitation*: And yet that *mans will hath as much natural Liberty, as if God had not gone before it with any Decree of the Event*, and as much *moral liberty* as we have *moral virtue* or *holineſs*.

And theſe Principles I have laid down in a little room that Tempted perſons may ſee, that it is our dark and puzzled braines, and our ſelfiſh diſeaſed hearts that are the cauſe of our quarrel-

ing

ing with God, his Decrees, and Providences, and as soon as we come to our selves and are cured, these odious apprehensions vanish, and God appeareth, as the unclouded Sun, in the Lustre of his Amiable Goodness; And when we *come to Heaven* we shall see to our Joy and his Glory, that *Heaven, Earth, and Hell declare him to be all perfectly Good, without any mixture of evil in himself, or in any of his word or works.* And we shall find all our sinful suspicions and murmurings turned into a joyful consent to

the

the Angelical praises; Psal. 136. 1. 2, 26, &c. *O give thanks unto the Lord for he is Good, for his mercy is for ever. O give thanks unto the God of Heaven, for his mercy is for ever.* Rom. 4. 8, 11. *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come* —— *Thou art worthy O Lord to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power: for thou hast Created all things; and for thy Pleasure they are, and were Created.* —— Rev. 7. 12. *Amen, Blessing and Glory and Wisdome and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and*

Power,

Power, and Might, unto our God for ever and ever Amen. The Lord is Good to all, and his tender Mercies are over all his works. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great Mercy. Psal. 145. 8, 9. The Word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth: He loveth righteousness and judgements; the Earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Psal. 33. 4. 5. O how great is thy Goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before

fore the sons of men. Psal. 31. 19. O therefore that men (instead of quarrelling with his unknown mysteries) would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful works to the Children of men, Psal. 107. 8, 15, 21, 31.

In the Conclusion, I take it to be wholsome advise to those that are under this Temptation;

1. That they will oft read over the Psalms of Praise, and think when they read them, whe-

ther *David* and the ancient Church, were not like to know what they said, than a self-conceited, or a melancholy tempted sinner?

2. That they would consider who it is that is the Grand enemy of the Glory of Gods Goodness; And they shall soon find that it is no other than the Devil: None but he that is most evil, can most envy Infinite Goodness his honour: And is the Devil fit to be believed against God? And that after the warning

warning of our first Parents ruine, which befell them for believing Satan when he slandered, both Gods Wisdome, Truth and Goodnes to them?

3. That they would bethink them to what end it is that the Tempter and the Enemy of God doth thus deny his Goodnes. Is it not a plain act of malice against God and us? Is it not that he may disgrace God as evil, and rob him of his Glory; and also that he may hinder man from Loving him, and so destroy all

piety, and virtue, and goodness in the World? Who can Love him whom he believeth to be *bad*, and so *unlovely*? And what Grace or happiness can there be without the Love of God?

4. That they would think what horrid wickedness this sin containeth (where Melancholy and involuntariness doth not extenuate it.) Is it any better than a denying that there is any God? As is said before; To be God is *to be Perfectly Powerful, Wise and Good*: And if there

be none such, there can be no God: And then who made the World, and all that is *Good* in it by derivative goodness? Yea is it not to represent the most amiable blessed God, in Satans Image (who is most evil and a Murderer from the beginning *Joh.* 8. 44.) that so men may hate him and fly from him as they do from Devils? And can you tell how great a crime this is?

5. That they would consider, how this impious conceit is calculated

for the licensing of all manner of villany in the world, and to root out all the relicts of goodness from among mankind. For who can expect that any man should be better than his Maker; and that he should have any Good, which denyeth God to be Good?

6. That they would labour hard to be better themselves. For he that hath a true Created Goodness, is thereby prepared to relish and admire Gods primitive uncreated goodness. Whereas a wicked

or a *guilty* ſinner, cannot much value that which he is ſo unſuitable to, and which he thinks will be to him a conſuming fire. *Truly God is good to Iſrael, and to ſuch as are of a clean heart*, Pſal. 73. 1. But he that liveth in the Love of ſin, will be doubting of the Love of God, and fearful of his wrath, and unfit to reliſh and delightfully perceive his goodneſs. Pſal. 34. 8. *Taſte and ſee that the Lord is Good; bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him.*

7. *Study Gods Love in*

manifested in *Christ*: Then you shall see what man on earth may see. But think not falsly, narrowly, basely of his office, his performance or his Covenant.

8. Dwell in the believing foresight of the Celestial Glory: The reflections of which may wrap up a believing soul on earth, into extasies of gratitude and delight.

9. Remember what *Goodness* there is in the *Holiness* of God, which is demonstrated in his severest Justice; Yea what mercy it is to forewarn men of the

punishment

punishment of sin, that they may want no necessary means to scape it.

10. Remember how unfit the selfish Interest of obstinate despisers of Grace and salvation, is, to be the measure or index of the Goodness of God: And how much more credible the concordant testimony of the Heavenly Host is, who Live in the Love of Love it self, and are everlastingly delighted in the Praises of the Infinite, *Greatness*, *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of the most perfect, blessed, Glorious God.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM